

(d) The county committee's decision may be appealed to the State Committee within 15 calendar days of receipt of the notice of the decision if the appellant desires.

(e) In the event that an election is nullified as a result of a challenge or appeal, or an error in the election process, a special election must be conducted by the county office and closely monitored by the FSA State office.

§ 7.16 Report of election.

(a) The county committee must file an election report with the Secretary through the Deputy Administrator's office not later than 20 days after the date an election is held.

(b) The election report must include:

- (1) The number of eligible voters in the local administrative area;
- (2) The number of ballots cast in the election by eligible voters;
- (3) The percentage of eligible voters that cast ballots;
- (4) The number of ballots disqualified in the election;
- (5) The percentage of ballots disqualified;
- (6) The number of nominees for each seat up for election;
- (7) The race, ethnicity, and gender of each nominee, as provided by the voluntary self identification of each nominee; and
- (8) The final election results, including the number of ballots received by each nominee.

§ 7.17 Remedial measures.

(a) FSA will consider additional efforts to achieve the objective that county committees are fairly representative of farmers and ranchers within areas covered by the committees. Such efforts may include, but are not limited to, compliance reviews of selected counties, further centralization of the election process, and the appointment of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to particular committees in accordance with a notice published in the FEDERAL REGISTER issued by the Secretary authorizing such appointments.

(b) The Secretary may ensure inclusion of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers by appointment of 1 additional voting member to a county com-

mittee when a significant population of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers exist in the committee jurisdiction and no member is elected from that socially disadvantaged population. The appointment of the socially disadvantaged voting member will be in accordance with standards and qualifications furnished by the State committee.

§ 7.18 Eligibility requirements of county committee members.

(a) To be eligible to hold office as a county committee member or an alternate to any county office, a person must meet the conditions specified in this section.

(b) Such person must:

- (1) Meet the eligibility for nomination criteria specified in § 7.8;
- (2) Reside in the local administrative area in which the election is held, in cases where a State line, a county line, or a local administrative area boundary runs through a farm, eligible farmers and ranchers residing on such farm may hold office in the county and local administrative area in which the farm has been determined to be located for program participation purposes;
- (3) Not be ineligible based on prohibited political activities, as specified in the Uniform Guidelines;
- (4) Not have been dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services; removed for cause from any public office; convicted of any fraud, larceny, embezzlement, or felony, unless any such disqualification is waived by the State committee or the Deputy Administrator;
- (5) Not have been removed as a county committee member, alternate to any county office, or as an employee for: Failure to perform the duties of the office; committing, attempting, or conspiring to commit fraud; incompetence; impeding the effectiveness of any program administered in the county; refusal to carry out or failure to comply with the Department's policy relating to equal opportunity and civil rights, including the equal employment policy, or interfering with others in carrying out such policy; or for violation of official instructions, unless any such disqualification is waived by the